



**PRESS RELEASE ON
THE 2ND INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON WORLD CIVILIZATIONS AND
HISTORIC ROUTES**

(Sofia, 15-16 November 2018)

The BSEC PERMIS Secretary General, Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES participated in the “2nd International Congress on World Civilizations and Historic Routes” (Sofia, Bulgaria, 15-16 November 2018), co-organized by the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Bulgaria and the UNWTO.

The main objective of the Congress was to underline the importance of the sustainable promotion and presentation of the cultural heritage of countries and regions, in order to adopt and enhance best practices in tourism development; among them, the revival of historic and cultural routes was especially discussed, as most participants agreed that similar routes help reveal the unique history, culture and natural assets of regions and countries.

In his brief interventions at the High Level Meeting, Ambassador CHRISTIDES informed the audience on the multifaceted activities of the BSEC Working Groups on Culture and on Tourism and underlined that in the broader region of the Black Sea many and significant Civilizations were established and flourished. The cultural and historic heritage of the region is unique and the effort of the BSEC Organization is how to best preserve and present it.

On the side-lines of the Congress Ambassador CHRISTIDES held brief bilateral meetings with many of the participants, especially the new Deputy Secretary General of the UNWTO H.E. Mr. Jaime Alberto CABAL, the Minister of Tourism of Cambodia H.E. Dr. Thong KHON, the Deputy Minister of Culture and Tourism of Turkey, H.E. Mr. Omer ARISOY, with the Dep. Minister of Administration, Finance and Tourism Affairs of Afghanistan H.E. Mrs. Sayeda Mojgan MOSTAFAVI, with the Secretary General for Tourism Policy and Development from Greece Mr. George TZIALLAS, with the well-known extreme athlete and activist Mr. Kai MARKUS (founder of the “Run my Silk Road” initiative) and others.

On the second day of the Congress, Ambassador CHRISTIDES was received by the Minister of Tourism of the Republic of Bulgaria, H.E. Mrs. Nikolina ANGELKOVA, whom he informed in detail on the results of the last meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism, on the implementation of ongoing initiatives and on the planned activities for the near future.

The BSEC PERMIS Secretary General visited also the headquarters of the “Bulgarian Industrial Association” (BIA), where he met with its Executive President Mr. Radosvet RADEV, with whom he discussed the possibility of hosting an International Tourism Business Forum at the “ALBENA AD” Touristic complex, close to Varna, preferably during the first semester of 2019.